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ALBANIAN LEADERS STRUGGLE FOR POSITION

The following article may be of interest because of its explanation of the Hoxha-Shehu relationship. It maintains that Enver Hoxha has the support of the USSR and hence will remain in power, but that his need of a strong-arm man will prevent his getting rid of Mehmet Shehu.

The complicated jockeying for position among the Stalinite beys has long been a matter of common knowledge, in spite of efforts to keep it secret. It is also known that victory in the struggle depends on the support of Moscow. The chief rivals in private, though they act ac comrades in public, are Mehmet Shehu and Enver Hoxha. Mehmet finds it hard to bear the leadership of Enver who, during the war, displayed no military competence, activity, nor courage. In those days Shehu enjoyed greater popularity and authority than Hoxha.

The struggle between the two rivals has divided the whole government into two camps. The participation of the Soviets, without whom nothing can be done in a Satellite country, only serves to confuse the issue. Enver Hoxha has supported the Soviet General Glebov while Shehu used to support the Soviet Minister of Tirana, Chuvakin. When the situation had reached a climax, Manush Myftiu, who favored Hoxha, was sent to ask the intervention of Moscow in clarifying the situation. He also bore instructions and recommendations from General Glebov. Chuvakin, then in Moscow, was supporting Shehu. The Kremlin heard both sides and adjudged in favor of Hoxha. Evidently the Kremlin puts its greatest confidence in cowards and idlers.

But the struggle is not ended. Chuvakin did not return to Albania. His place has been taken by Levychkin. Meantime, Hoxha is consolidating his position by appointing new people in his cabinet. He relieved Myftiu of his duties as deputy minister and gave him a more important post in the party.

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An even greater snub was administered to Shehu by appointing Bedri Spahiu Minister of Education. Kahreman Ylli, with all the others hostile to the Enver Hoxha apparatus, was eased out of his post as Minister of Education with praise for the successes he had achieved for Albanian education and culture. Even Lefter Goga was removed from his post as Minister of Agricultural Procurement. Josif Pasko is no longer Minister of State Control. Their places are filled by persons on whom Hoxha can rely, Mago Como, for example, as Minister of State Control and Haki Toska as Minister of Agricultural Procurement.

Nevertheless, Shehu is still secure because Hoxha continues to need a collaborator with strong hands and without fear of bloodletting to carry out his drastic measures and policy of terrorism. Such a man is Shehu. Many examples could be cited to show that Hoxha himself is afraid of Shehu and does not dare to take steps to eliminate him. Hence the present situation is likely to continue.

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